

# Department of Human Services

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## Lisa Holland gets life for killing Ricky

**By jack kresnak**  
free press staff writer

*November 28, 2006*

LANISING -- Saying it was her "privilege" to sentence Lisa Holland, Ingham County Circuit Court Judge Paula Manderfield on Tuesday sentenced the adoptive mother of 7-year-old Ricky Holland to prison for the rest of her life.

"You buried your dog, but you threw away your child," Manderfield said in a hearing generally devoid of emotion, except for two times when the judge herself choked up.

Holland, 33, chose to say nothing at her sentencing for killing Ricky in the summer of 2005.

She and her husband, Tim Holland, 37, then claimed the boy had run away.

In fact, Tim Holland had left Ricky's body wrapped in garbage bags in a swampy area south of Dansville.

Tim Holland who lived with his wife and five children near Williamston before the coverup of their crimes ended in January 2006 already was sentenced to 30-60 years in prison for second-degree murder.

Tim Holland was a key witness against his wife.

Most of the jurors who convicted Lisa Holland were present and were acknowledged both by the judge and by Ingham County Assistant Prosecutor Mike Ferency.

Minutes after Lisa Holland's sentencing, Ingham County Prosecutor Stuart Dunnings III said that he was giving approval today to Michigan Children's Ombudsman Verlie Ruffin to release her office's report on the Ricky Holland case.

The long-awaited report had been held up by the criminal proceedings against the Hollands.

Ruffin said this morning that she had not yet received Dunnings' written permission to release the report but understood that it was coming today. Ruffin said the report must be redacted and shown to the state Department of Human Services before its release to the public and legislators. She said that may take a few days and the report might be ready for release on Friday.

Contact JACK KRESNAK at 313-223-4544 or [jkresnak@freepress.com](mailto:jkresnak@freepress.com).

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# No chance of parole for Holland

## Jurors, murdered boy's birth mom at hearing

**BY JACK KRESNAK**  
 FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

November 29, 2006

LANSING -- Lisa Holland always took it hard when she lost a pet, her family said.

"I think she's very soft hearted," Holland's sister Jane Gauss told the Free Press.

But Tuesday, in sentencing Holland to life in prison without parole, Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield implied that the 33-year-old woman cared more for her pets than her adopted son, Ricky, 7, whom she was convicted of severely abusing and killing with a hammer blow in July 2005.

"Basically, you buried your dog, but you threw away your child," Manderfield said.

"But it is my privilege to sentence you to the Michigan Department of Corrections for the rest of your life," the judge continued, pausing to hold back a sob before adding, "with no possibility of parole."

Manderfield's rebuke prompted Holland to cry, her attorney Mike Nichols said.

But, unlike the tongue-lashing the judge gave Holland's husband, Tim Holland, when she sentenced him Nov. 15 to 30 to 60 years in prison for Ricky's death, the judge and attorneys were brief and generally free of emotion.

Lisa Holland declined to make a statement. She has an automatic right to appeal.

"She got what she deserves, and I hope she sits and rots in prison," Ricky's birth mother, Casey Caswell, who attended the sentencing, said.

At the request of Holland's lawyers, Manderfield vacated the conviction for first-degree child abuse, because it covered some of the same acts as those involved in the first-degree felony murder conviction and letting it stand would amount to double jeopardy. If the murder conviction is ever reversed, the child abuse conviction could be reinstated.

Most of the jurors who convicted Lisa Holland on Oct. 27 were present.

"It just didn't feel right to walk away without seeing the final page of the book," said former juror Lori Holuta. "It's as much justice as we had in our hands to give."

Ingham County Prosecutor Stuart Dunnings III said the investigation of Ricky's death continues, but he will allow Children's Ombudsman Verlie Ruffin to release her office's report on the case. A redacted version could be available this week, Ruffin said.

Contact **JACK KRESNAK** at 313-223-4544 or [jkresnak@freepress.com](mailto:jkresnak@freepress.com).



Attorney Mike Nichols said the judge's verbal disapproval Tuesday prompted his client to cry. Lisa Holland, right, was convicted of killing her adopted son, Ricky, 7, with a hammer in 2005. (BECKY SHINK/Lansing State Journal)

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November 29, 2006

## Judge: 'You threw away your child'

Birth mom weeps, but Lisa Holland declines to speak before being sentenced to life in Ricky's death.

**Karen Bouffard / The Detroit News**

**LANSING** -- An emotional judge on Tuesday sentenced Lisa Holland to life in prison for killing her adopted son, Ricky, noting that even her family dog was treated better than the tiny 7-year-old boy.

Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield paused several times to keep her composure as she handed down her sentence.

"You buried your dog, but you threw away your child," Manderfield said, referring to testimony the Hollands buried their pet in the backyard of their Williamston home.

"It is my privilege to sentence you to the Michigan Department of Corrections for the remainder of your life, with no possibility for parole."

Given one last chance to publicly explain herself, Lisa Holland declined to address the court. And no one made a statement on behalf of the victim: the youngster Lisa Holland and her husband, Tim, adopted through the state foster care system when he was 3. Tim Holland, who testified against his wife, was sentenced Nov. 15 to 30-60 years for second-degree murder.

Ricky's birth mother, Casey Caswell, sat near the back of the courtroom and wept. The Hollands reported Ricky missing on July 2, 2005, spurring a massive 10-day search by nearly 2,000 volunteers. Tim Holland led detectives to his son's body in an Ingham County swamp in January.

He testified his wife killed the boy with a tack hammer and let him linger in a semiconscious state for more than a week before his death.

State Department of Human Services Director Marianne Udow issued a statement, saying: "At least this verdict brings some measure of justice for Ricky."

"We are deeply saddened by Ricky's case and the testimony we heard," Udow said. "Clearly, parents Lisa and Tim Holland were terribly and fatally cruel to a 7-year-old boy -- a reality that devastates us all."

Both Human Services and the state Office of the Children's Ombudsman launched investigations into Ricky's case, but officials are awaiting permission from Ingham County Prosecutor Stuart Dunning III to release the results.

Dunning said Tuesday he will notify the agencies soon that they can make their reports public. He said his department's investigation into Ricky's death continues, and others could still be charged.

Dunning will ask the Ingham County Probate Court to appoint a personal representative for Ricky. His body remains in a morgue.

"For those of us who worked on this case, it's going to be with us for the rest of our lives," Dunning said.

*You can reach Karen Bouffard at (734) 462-2206 or [kbouffard@detnews.com](mailto:kbouffard@detnews.com).*

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Published November 29, 2006

## Tragic Holland case ends with tears at sentencing

Lisa Holland, 33, gets mandatory life with no parole

By Kevin Grasha  
Lansing State Journal

A single teardrop rolled down Lisa Holland's cheek, as she was sentenced Tuesday to life in prison without parole - the mandatory punishment under Michigan law - for the death of her adopted son Ricky.

Her tears were the only visible remorse shown by Holland, who chose not to make a statement during the hearing.

Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield told the 33-year-old Williamston woman: "Basically, you buried your dog, but you threw away your child."

After pausing to compose herself, Manderfield then told Holland she would spend the rest of her life in prison.

A jury on Oct. 27 convicted Holland of first-degree felony murder and first-degree child abuse in 7-year-old Ricky's death. Manderfield said the evidence overwhelmingly supported the verdict.

Holland, wearing a yellow jail jumpsuit and slippers, stood and softly cried while Manderfield spoke.

When asked if she had anything to say, Holland shook her head and replied, "No."



(Photo by BECKY SHINK/Lansing State Journal)

No parole: A tear rolls down Lisa Holland's face as she is sentenced Tuesday to serve life in prison for the murder of her 7-year-old son, Ricky, in July 2005. When asked by Judge Paula Manderfield if she had anything to say, Holland shook her head and replied, "No."

### Appeal expected

Lisa Holland - who was sentenced Tuesday to life in prison without parole - will appeal her conviction, said one of her attorneys, Mike Nichols.

Holland has filled out the necessary paperwork requesting a court-appointed attorney to handle the appeal, Nichols said.

### First-degree child abuse conviction set aside

At Lisa Holland's sentencing hearing Tuesday, Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield set aside Holland's conviction for first-degree child abuse.

Her attorneys, citing Michigan Supreme Court case law, filed a motion to vacate, or set aside, the first-degree child abuse conviction.

Holland also was found guilty of first-degree felony murder, and child abuse was assumed to be part of that, attorneys said. By law, she could not be punished twice for the same act.

Manderfield said it was a technicality that did not affect Holland's life sentence.

### Related content from LSJ:

- [VIDEO: Lisa Holland sentenced to life in prison \(11/28/06\)](#)

One of her attorneys, Mike Nichols, said there was no reason for her to make a statement.

**Photo Gallery:**[Lisa Holland sentencing](#)

"There's nothing that Lisa Holland can say, nothing that I can say ... that can bring Ricky Holland back - that can undo what has been done," Nichols said.

Her husband, Tim Holland, 37, was sentenced earlier this month to 30 to 60 years in prison. He pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and testified against his wife.

Ricky was reported missing from his family's Williamston home on July 2, 2005, but testimony during Lisa Holland's six-week trial revealed he died the previous evening. He likely succumbed to a severe head injury inflicted about a week before he died, when Lisa Holland hit him with a tack hammer.

In January of this year, Tim Holland led police to Ricky's remains, which he had dumped in a marshlike area near Dansville.

Shortly after Ricky's death, the Hollands buried a family dog in their back yard.

Holland's sister, 47-year-old Jane Gauss of Haslett, said she was disappointed in Manderfield's comments. She said it was Tim Holland who admitted dumping Ricky's body.

"Lisa didn't do that," Gauss said. "Tim did."

Assistant Prosecutor Mike Ferency, in his comments, focused on how the community - including neighbors, teachers, medical professionals and police - shares the responsibility for raising a child.

"I think this case demonstrates the careful balance that has to be achieved between a parent's right to rear children and the need for the community to be involved," Ferency said in court.

Ricky suffered years of abuse at the hands of Lisa Holland, according to testimony at her trial. But few said they suspected anything. Even fewer reported abuse.

Ten of the 15 jurors and alternate jurors who were part of Holland's six-week trial, attended the packed hearing. Television cameras filled the jury box.

Gauss said as the case goes through the appeal process, her family's nightmare will continue.

"It's still going to go on," she said.

Contact Kevin Grasha at 267-1347 or [kgrasha@lsj.com](mailto:kgrasha@lsj.com).

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## Mother gets life in prison for adopted son's death

11/28/2006, 5:44 p.m. ET

**By DAVID EGGERT**  
**The Associated Press**

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — As she did throughout her murder trial, Lisa Holland kept quiet and showed little emotion Tuesday when a tearful judge sentenced her to life in prison without parole for killing her 7-year-old adopted son, Ricky.

Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield delivered the sentence, which was required under Michigan law. Holland, 33, of Williamston, was convicted in October of first-degree felony murder.

"Basically you buried your dog, but you threw away your child," Manderfield told Holland, choking back tears. The judge cited trial testimony that Holland and her husband, Tim, buried a family dog in their backyard soon after Ricky vanished from his home 15 miles east of Lansing on July 1, 2005.

Tim and Lisa Holland told searchers and the media that Ricky had run away, sparking a nine-day search by 1,700 volunteers and hundreds of law enforcement officers.

In January, Tim Holland, 37, led police to Ricky's skeletal remains in a marshy game area and admitted dumping his son's body. He told authorities his wife hit Ricky in the head with a hammer while he was away from home.

"It is my privilege to sentence you to the Michigan Department of Corrections for the remainder of your life with no possibility of parole," Manderfield told Lisa Holland.

One of Lisa Holland's attorneys, Mike Nichols, promised an appeal of her conviction and said there was nothing Holland could say to bring back Ricky. Lisa Holland had accused her husband of killing Ricky.

"Lisa Holland is going to be punished. The jury has spoken," Nichols said. "Lisa Holland wishes to maintain her silence."

The jurors who convicted Lisa Holland sat in the courtroom Tuesday to see her being sentenced.

Earlier this month, Tim Holland was sentenced to 30 to 60 years in prison for his role in Ricky's death. He agreed to plead guilty to second-degree murder and testify against Lisa Holland so he could avoid a life sentence.

Tim Holland testified that his wife abused the boy for years, restraining him with ropes in the basement. He said the boy was listless and unable to walk in the last week of his life — not eating, drinking, walking or talking and smelling like urine.

The Hollands became Ricky's foster parents in 2000 and adopted him in 2003, the year after the parental rights of his biological parents were terminated because of neglect. The couple also adopted Ricky's three younger siblings and had a child of their own.

The case has led to scrutiny of the state's child protection system and whether workers did enough to protect Ricky and his siblings.

Lisa Holland's sentencing may now allow the Michigan children's ombudsman and the Department of Human Services to turn over separate reports on Ricky's case to lawmakers and the media.

The officials had said they could not release certain files because Ricky's death still was being investigated by prosecutors.

Ingham County Prosecutor Stuart Dunnings III said Tuesday that he was giving ombudsman Verlie Ruffin the OK to release her report. Ruffin said Tuesday that once she receives an official release from Dunnings,

she will release the report — possibly within two or three days.

"There's certain things we have to redact, confidential information," Ruffin said.

DHS spokeswoman Maureen Sorbet said that before the department can release its report, state law requires a 14-day period during which people named in the report are notified.

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David Eggert can be reached at [deggert\(at\)ap.org](mailto:deggert(at)ap.org)

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On the Net:

Michigan Department of Human Services: <http://www.michigan.gov/dhs>

Office of Children's Ombudsman: <http://www.michigan.gov/oco>

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## Beaten tot released from Hurley

Fund set up to aid girl who allegedly was abused

**FLINT**

**THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION**

Tuesday, November 28, 2006

**By Kim Crawford**

**kcrawford@flintjournal.com • 810.766.6242**

A badly beaten, bruised and burned toddler from Fenton Township, who was initially on life support after her mother and her mother's boyfriend tried to drop her off at a local hospital, was discharged from Flint's Hurley Medical Center on Thanksgiving Day.

"But she by no means is out of the woods," Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton said Monday about the little girl named Gina.

Gina, 21/2, spent 12 days in Hurley's pediatric intensive care unit after her mother, Jessica A. Lake, 18, and Lake's boyfriend, Christopher L. Rowand, 21, tried to leave her at Genesys Regional Medical Center on Nov. 3.

They were arrested by a Genesee County Sheriff's Department paramedic as they fled and have been charged with first-degree child abuse.

Gina, who originally was listed in very critical condition, had 47 different wounds and injuries, including head trauma and cigarette burns, authorities said.

Leyton, who held a news conference Monday about the case, said Gina is walking and has the use of her limbs, but suffers "severe emotional issues" and will require further medical attention and examination. The state Department of Human Services has placed her with people who are caring for her, he said.

Leyton and Karen Vance, a manager of the main branch of the Citizens Bank, also announced the creation of the "Angel Fund for Gina," in response to the outpouring of phone calls that the prosecutor's office, sheriff's department and Hurley received from people who wanted to help in some way.

Vance said that whether people want to make a cash donation or give Gina a stuffed animal, they can do so at any of the bank branches. Leyton called the bank's involvement "a blessing."

The account will be overseen by a child abuse victims advocate, with cash donations used for whatever needs the little girl may face in the future.

### QUICK TAKE

Angel Fund for Gina

- Citizens Bank has set up a fund to help the Fenton Township toddler who suffered severe child abuse. Cash donations or gifts may be made at any Citizens branch.

The prosecutor said the toddler has "overcome great odds" just surviving her injuries.

His office has filed a petition to terminate the parental rights of Lake and the child's biological father, whom he described as living in another state and having no involvement with the toddler.

In the meantime, Lake and Rowand aren't due back in Genesee County's Central District Court until Jan. 16 before Burton District Judge Richard L. Hughes.

The case has been adjourned while Lake is sent for a state forensic examination to determine whether she can be held criminally responsible for her actions and can understand and help her attorney in her defense.

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Article published Nov 28, 2006  
Sheriff investigates child death case  
Infant likely died of infection; hospital notified authorities

By SHANNON MURPHY  
Times Herald

Preliminary results of a Monday autopsy show a 6-month-old Cottrellville Township boy most likely died from a bacterial infection, said St. Clair County Medical Examiner Daniel Spitz.

Further tests are being done to confirm the results, Spitz said. Sheriff Dan Lane said the case still is being investigated as suspected child abuse.

The boy's parents, Lane said, are considered "persons of interest." They have not been arrested or detained by police, he said.

Connie Hassler, the boy's grandmother, identified him as John B. Caston. The family has set up a memorial fund to help pay for John's funeral service. "He was a very beautiful baby," said Hassler of Marine City. "He was taken away from us, but at least we can have a proper goodbye."

John was driven to St. John River District Hospital in East China Township on Wednesday with "several severe injuries," police said. He later was transported to the pediatric intensive-care unit at a University of Michigan hospital.

The sheriff department was called last week to the boy's home in the 800 block of Oak Street in Cottrellville Township after officials in Ann Arbor told authorities about John's injuries.

Child Protective Service officials, along with sheriff deputies, removed two other children from the home in the Shangri-La Village Homes, a trailer-park community south of Marine City.

Lane would not give details about John's injuries.

"Child Protective Services (in St. Clair County) got a call from protective services in Ann Arbor about suspected abuse," Lane said.

Police still are interviewing family members, witnesses and hospital staff. Lane said police hope to find out exactly what type of injuries the child had, who drove him to the hospital, and if the injuries contributed to his death.

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# THE DAILY Reporter

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## Wertz-Hale child abuse trial slated to begin on Monday

Print Page

By Don Reid-Staff Writer

COLDWATER — The first of two trials of aggravated child abuse will begin on Monday with an expert witness now approved for the defense of Brandalyn Wertz-Hale, 24, after a Monday hearing.

Branch County Circuit Court Judge Michael Cherry certified Dr. Pinkus Geva, chairman of the Pediatrics Department at Sparrow Hospital in Lansing, as a qualified expert witness in the case. This will be his first time as an expert.

Dr. Geva, an Israeli-born doctor at Sparrow since 1999, is an expert in pediatric nephrology, the study of kidney functions in children.



Brandalyn Wertz-Hale

Wertz-Hale and her husband, Jonathan Hale, 27, are charged with child abuse, first and second degrees, after Jonathon's then 2-year-old daughter and then four-year-old son nearly died from lack of water in 2003 after a visit with their father over the Memorial Day weekend.

Prosecutor Kirk Kashian and Assistant Prosecutor Terri Norris filed a "Bill of Particulars" demanded by Wertz-Hale's defense attorney Rhonda Ives. It stated the prosecution intends to prove at trial "that on or about May 31, 2003 through June 6, 2003 at 10 Berry Street in Quincy..., Brandalyn Marie Wertz (Hale) did cause serious physical and/or serious mental harm or did intentionally commit an act that was cruel to children (whose names have been removed for their protection) by failing to provide and/or withholding water and/or proper fluids and/or furnishing or providing salt."

Dr. Geva said he reviewed the medical records after the children were seen at the emergency room at Community Health Center of Branch County and then at Bronson Methodist Hospital in Kalamazoo. He also reviewed transcripts of prior court transcripts.

The youngest had a very high level of salt in her system, called hypernatraemia. Geva said the salt build up came over a long period of time.

"Her body adjusted," the doctor explained, adding that if a child is given large amount of salt over a short period of time, he/she would go into a coma.

When asked how long the salt build up in her body took, Dr. Geva answered "there is no way to tell." He said no civilized society would conduct tests on children to determine salt tolerances. He said he knew of no research in the field.

Dr. Geva also said environmental factors, such as the heat of the day, would effect salt build up. The doctors also explained that the diet of today's society is very high in salt. The hot dogs the children ate at a church picnic would have high salt. A McDonald's fast food diet would put high amounts of in the body, according to Geva. It does not hurt a person if there is enough fluids to flush it out.

"The body maintains equilibrium," Dr. Geva explained.

The Sparrow doctor criticized the treatment at the ER, as the young girl was given "Hi-C" fruit drink and chocolate milk. Neither of them put proper fluids into her body.

"Chocolate milk is a food not a fluid," he testified.

At a preliminary hearing, the prosecution expert, Dr. Robert Beck, said "forced depravation" from water left the girl and boy "in grave risk" of death.

The doctor said "this was non-accidental, this was abuse." The children were fine after three days of treatment with fluids. Water depravation "is the only explanation I have that fits the clinical situation and the response the children had to treatment" the doctors stated.

Dr. Beck explained the children had to be intentionally deprived of water because children "will seek water."

Dr. Geva agreed the drive to quench thirst is one of the strongest for a human. He said this after he was asked if he was aware the girl tried to drink from a toilet in the ER.

Jonathan Hale is set for trial in January on the same charges. His attorney J. R. Colbeck won an argument for separate trials. Colbeck has argued there would be evidentiary problems if tried together, including those of "spousal immunity," which prevents husband and wife from testifying against each other. The defense attorney argued the cases were not related.

"There is no allegation of joint actions, conspiracy, no aiding and abetting," he said, adding "there is a reasonable chance the defenses would be contradictory or prejudicial to the other."

It has taken over three years to bring the case to trial because of appeals. Kashian dismissed the original child abuse, second degree, charges to file the more serious offense when the couple would not agree to a plea bargain.

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## Officer faces trial in death

### Boy, 4, shot himself with cop's weapon

**BY CECIL ANGEL**  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

*November 29, 2006*

A veteran Detroit police officer was ordered to stand trial Tuesday in the death of a 4-year-old boy who shot himself to death with the officer's department-issued handgun that he stored under a bed.

Louis Anderson, 58, of Detroit, was bound over for trial on one count of involuntary manslaughter, a 15-year felony, and one count of second-degree child abuse, a 4-year felony, in the death of his girlfriend's son, Kenneth Thomas.

At the time of the shooting on Aug. 10, Anderson was at his Detroit home babysitting five children all under the age of 6 and had fallen asleep, according to witness statements. Anderson told police the sound of his .40-caliber Glock handgun awakened him.

His defense attorney, Elbert Hatchett, had argued before Judge Kenneth King in Detroit's 36th District Court that the charges should be reduced to reckless discharge of a weapon causing death, a 2-year misdemeanor.

But King sided with the prosecution, saying that Anderson left the children unsupervised with an unsecured gun in the house.

"You know, I know, everybody knows children play under beds," King said.

Among the witnesses at the preliminary examination was the boy's mother, Jurrie Thomas. Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor Lisa Lindsey found herself sparring with Thomas, who was supposed to be a key witness for the prosecution, but appeared to have changed her earlier statements to police to favor the defense.

The tension came to a head when Lindsey asked Thomas if she, at any time since Aug. 10, ever asked Anderson what happened. Thomas replied, "No."

"Never once asked how your son came to be killed in that house. That what you're telling us?" Lindsey asked.

"Yes. That's what I'm telling you," Thomas replied.

More words were exchanged before Lindsey paused.

"You love this man don't you," Lindsey said.

"Yea. I love him," Thomas said.

"And you love him more than you loved your child," Lindsey fired back.

"Don't even go there, Ms. Lindsey," Thomas replied.

Contact **CECIL ANGEL** at 313-223-4531 or [angel@freepress.com](mailto:angel@freepress.com).

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## States banning smoking around children

**By Emily Bazar**

USA TODAY

*November 28, 2006*

Anti-tobacco forces are opening a new front in the war against smoking by banning it in private places such as homes and cars when children are present.

Starting Jan. 1, Texas will restrict smoking in foster parents' homes at all times and in cars when children are present, says Darrell Azar of the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Vermont, Washington and other states and counties already prohibit foster parents from smoking around children in their homes and cars.

Arkansas and Louisiana passed laws this year forbidding anyone from smoking in cars carrying young children. Courts are ordering smoke-free environments in custody and visitation disputes.

"We are very rapidly moving to protect children from secondhand smoke," says John Banzhaf, executive director of Action on Smoking and Health. "Even from their own parents and grandparents."

Former surgeon general Richard Carmona said in June that children exposed to secondhand smoke suffer an increased risk of respiratory ailments and sudden infant death syndrome.

Most smoking bans apply to workplaces and spots like bars and restaurants.

Smokers' rights groups liken banning smoking in private to the "Salem witch hunt," says Gary Nolan, spokesman for The Smoker's Club, Inc. He says secondhand smoke is not dangerous. "If we don't reverse this, they'll be telling us what we can eat and what we can feed our children," Nolan says.

Former smoker Bob Mathis, a Democratic state representative in Arkansas, sponsored a law that bars smoking in a car carrying a child young enough to require a car seat. It took effect in July. A violator can be fined \$25 but can get out of it with proof of participation in a smoking-cessation program. A similar law took effect in Louisiana in August.

"We have laws on the books in every state of the union against child abuse," Mathis says. "This is a form of child abuse."

At least six states and some counties prohibit foster parents from smoking when foster children are present, says Kathleen Dachille, director of the Legal Resource Center for Tobacco Regulation, Litigation & Advocacy at the University of Maryland School of Law. "There are times when it's appropriate to regulate what people can do in their home," she says. "The state is responsible for that child."

Some courts are ordering parents in custody and visitation disputes not to smoke around their kids.

Initially, courts considered restrictions when children had ailments such as asthma that are exacerbated by smoke, says Linda Elrod, a law professor and editor of Family Law Quarterly. Now, they're more willing to restrict smoking even when there are no obvious health problems, she says. It generally comes up when one parent complains about the other's smoking.

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# **Michigan Efforts On Aging-out Foster Youths Highlighted**

MIRS, Tuesday, November 28, 2006

The Department of Human Services' (DHS) work on helping foster youths who are aging out of foster care will be highlighted on the big stage of a National Governors Association meeting in Miami, Fla.

The meeting is of the National Governors Association (NGA) Best Practices Policy Academy, Nov. 28 through Nov. 30. At the meeting, DHS Director Marianne **UDOW** will outline key challenges on the "Interdepartmental Task Force on Services to At Risk Youth Transitioning to Adulthood" released in October.

The report includes 21 action steps to ease foster youths' transition to independence when they age out of foster care at 18 years of age.

"We have taken some important steps in implementing our plans," Udow said. "But, there is more to do and we hope our work inspires other state and other organizations to join our efforts to help these young people on the road to self sufficiency."

In May 2006, Michigan was one of six states selected to participate in the NGA Best Practices Policy Academy. Michigan policymakers worked with national experts to design and implement new policies and programs for youth aging out of foster care at the first meeting.

In Michigan, about 450 youths aged out of foster care during 2005. These young adults are at greater risk for poverty, homelessness and unemployment. The Michigan task force examined various challenges for foster care youths and included recommendations from foster youths with firsthand experience on the panel.





## Eaton workers help Head Start kids

Wednesday, November 29, 2006

By Tarryl Jackson

tjackson@citpat.com --768-4941

The children who Sue Serafin works with at Jackson's Head Start program often don't have decent clothes to wear. She was thrilled to learn employees from Eaton Corp. wanted to help change that.

"It's very giving on their part to do this," said Serafin, a teaching assistant for special-needs children sent to the school by the Jackson County Intermediate School District. "It shows that there are still people in the world that care about kids."

Employees at Eaton will buy clothing and toys for children at the Head Start program for the next few weeks.

Mindy Bialczyk, who teaches at Head Start, said her mother, Cheryl Mack, is leading the effort. The same act of charity took place a few years ago.

"It was such a great turnout," Bialczyk said. "It shows that people care."

This year Bialczyk gave 34 students a wish list to fill out with a toy and article of clothing, like a coat, mittens or a hat.

She gave the list to Mack, who wrote down the children's wishes' on mittens. The employees each choose a mitten and buy what is written on it for that child.

"We've got a lot of response," Mack said. "We've got everybody covered."

The students, who range from ages 3 to 6, mostly asked for action figures, dolls and educational toys.

Mack said her fellow co-workers, including Debbie Naylor, Crystal Williams and Trisha Stimpson, have been a great help to the effort.

"It's just open to anyone who wants to do it," Mack said.

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## Face of Hunger Campaign ready to break records

### FLINT

#### THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Wednesday, November 29, 2006

By Laura Misjak

[lmisjak@flintjournal.com](mailto:lmisjak@flintjournal.com) • 810.766.6249

FLINT - The Food Bank of Eastern Michigan was to officially kick off this year's Face of Hunger campaign -and unveil a \$600,000 goal - at news conference this morning.

The food bank is already well on its way to meeting this year's goal, its highest ever, said President Bill Kerr.

The organization has raised about \$60,000, which is about \$20,000 more than last year at this time. A newsletter and holiday card mailing to 23,000 donors brought in the early donations.

A fundraising collaboration involving Kettering University, Baker College of Flint, University of Michigan-Flint and Mott Community College is another unprecedented accomplishment this year, Kerr said.

"It's kind of cool because, to my knowledge, I've never seen all four of the major educational institutions join together for one cause," he said.

The colleges have helped before but never collectively.

Gerald McCarty, vice president of student services at Baker, said the four institutions have been meeting since the summer.

"This is just going to be the start of many collaborations," McCarty said. "It's a good way in the holiday season to start with something everybody can identify with."

"This is another really perfect example of how the different colleges work together," said Sharon Campbell, MCC communications specialist. "We're trying to do more things in collaboration. Hopefully this will be an annual event."

Baker, Kettering, MCC and UM-Flint are competing against one another to see which can donate the most money and items to the food bank.

The school raising the most money and items will receive a traveling trophy that will be handed off to next year's winner, McCarty said. The competition began Nov. 14 and will run until Dec. 15.

Presidents from each institution were to be at today's conference, with Baker President Julianne Princinsky speaking, Kerr said.

Also expected at the conference were the food bank's holiday partners, including representatives from Kroger, WJRT (Channel 12), The Flint Journal and UAW Local 598.

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#### QUICK TAKE

Coming Friday

- Look for a collection envelope for the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan's Face of Hunger campaign in The Flint Journal.



## Ottawa County's migrant population tops in state

Wednesday, November 29, 2006

By Nardy Baeza Bickel and Ted Roelofs

The Grand Rapids Press

With about 90,000 migrants moving through Michigan each year, that population ranks sixth in the nation.

And Ottawa County's migrant population ranks No. 1 in the state, according to a new study, which also ranked Kent County fifth and Allegan County sixth.

Martha Gonzalez-Cortes, state director of the Office of Migrant Affairs, said this group has become irreplaceable in the state's agricultural industry.

"In Ottawa County, the nursery industry closes up shop and goes away without this population. The blueberry industry closes up shop if this population isn't around."

But Gonzalez-Cortes said the study raises questions about the need for housing and education for migrant workers, which include U.S. citizens and undocumented residents.

"If we have 90,000 farm workers in the state, where do they live? We only have licensed housing for 25,000."

The study found there are more than 20,000 migrant children younger than 13, underlining the challenge facing schools charged with educating a transient population.

"We are continually monitoring these kids," said Evelyn Ortiz, director of migrant programs for Grand Rapids Public Schools.

"Where do they go? Where do they come from? There is always so much to do."

Ortiz said the district enrolled 136 migrant children in 2005-06. They were offered bilingual classes in 11 elementary schools.

Many students also participated in a summer school program while their parents picked crops.

"They move and they come back. We do as much as possible to keep them in school and to monitor their progress."

Gonzalez-Cortes said the study should put Michigan on better footing to win an array of federal grants by furnishing detailed information on the state's migrant population. The state's Department of Human Services spends about \$6 million a year for migrant day care, Medicaid and food stamps, she said.

The study was funded with a \$30,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and money from the state Department of Education. It accounts for seasonal and migrant workers in the fields, food processing, greenhouse and nursery production and reforestation.

Elvira Garcia has worked with migrant families in Ottawa County for 18 years, so she wasn't surprised by the study's results.

Garcia, who directs a migrant Head Start program in Ottawa County, hopes the study will convince funding

sources that "we need more help."

The study found that each year, 45,800 farm workers harvest Michigan crops. Another 44,916 people -- including 41,038 children and youth under 20 -- live in migrant and seasonal homes.

Ottawa County sees 6,030 migrant and seasonal workers each year, but the number swells to 11,942 when family members also are counted.

Kent County ranked fifth in the state, with 3,280 migrant workers and 3,496 non-workers in migrant households. Allegan was sixth, with 1,827 workers and 3,618 family members a year.

Garcia hopes the study proves the need to extend her Head Start program into September. It now runs from June to August.

More migrants are staying longer in the season to work at nurseries, she said. And their children could use the extra time in school.

"Migrants are caring people, very hard workers, and they want the best for their children. But when they're here, their main focus is to work so they can supply the basic needs for their children."

The study's results also will make it easier for other agencies working with migrants, said Tom Thornburg, head attorney for Farmworkers Legal Services.

"It's going to help by giving us updated information about where the farm workers are in the state and who they are. We'll be able to redeploy our limited resources to seek them out and offer them assistance."

**Send e-mail to the author: [nbickel@grpress.com](mailto:nbickel@grpress.com)**

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## October jobless rates dropped across Michigan

11/28/2006, 7:13 p.m. ET

**The Associated Press**

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Seasonally unadjusted unemployment rates in labor markets across Michigan declined in October, state officials said Tuesday.

All 17 of Michigan's labor market regions had lower rates than in September. State officials said that change is typical because people who hold summer jobs and don't work in other seasons leave the labor market. That lowers the unadjusted unemployment rates.

The state had more than 4.4 million seasonally unadjusted payroll jobs in October, up by 10,000 jobs from September levels. The biggest factor was a gain of 26,000 jobs at state and local schools and universities.

Jobs in the private sector declined. About 14,000 seasonal jobs were lost in leisure and hospitality services.

Education and health services added about 6,000 jobs, while retail trade added about 4,000 jobs.

National and state unemployment rates are seasonally adjusted to remove seasonal influences such as production cycles, holidays, model changeovers and climate conditions. Michigan's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in October was 6.9 percent, the highest in the nation.

The regional unadjusted rates for October ranged from a low of 4.1 percent in Ann Arbor to a high of 7.3 percent in Flint.

The state's major labor market areas, their seasonally unadjusted jobless rates for October and the change since September were:

- Ann Arbor, 4.1 percent, down from 4.6 percent.
- Battle Creek, 6.2 percent, down from 6.8 percent.
- Bay City, 5.7 percent, down from 6.4 percent.
- Detroit-Warren-Livonia, 6.7 percent, down from 7.0 percent.
- Flint, 7.3 percent, down from 8.1 percent.
- Grand Rapids-Wyoming, 5.3 percent, down from 6.0 percent.
- Holland-Grand Haven, 4.6 percent, down from 5.2 percent.
- Jackson, 6.5 percent, down from 7.3 percent.
- Kalamazoo-Portage, 4.8 percent, down from 5.4 percent.
- Lansing-East Lansing, 5.0 percent, down from 5.7 percent.
- Monroe, 6.3 percent, down from 6.8 percent.
- Muskegon-Norton Shores, 6.3 percent, down from 6.9 percent.
- Niles-Benton Harbor, 6.1 percent, down from 6.8 percent.
- Saginaw-Saginaw Township North, 6.3 percent, down from 7.1 percent.

- Upper Peninsula, 5.2 percent, down from 5.8 percent.
- Northeast Lower Michigan, 6.7 percent, down from 7.1 percent.
- Northwest Lower Michigan, 5.6 percent, down from 6.1 percent.

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On the Net:

Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth: <http://www.michigan.gov/cis>

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November 28, 2006

## **REGIONAL JOBLESS RATES FALL**

Unemployment rates in Michigan's 17 labor markets followed typical patterns in October when the rate declined across the state, due largely to seasonal drops in labor force levels, the Department of Labor and Economic Growth reported Tuesday. But compared to a year earlier, rates were higher in all of the state's markets, which all recorded losses in manufacturing jobs.

Rick Waclawek, director of the Bureau of Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives, said the declining labor force in October reflects a withdrawal from the labor market of summer and seasonal workers.

The monthly decline in regional unemployment rates, which are not seasonally adjusted, ranged from a high of .8 percentage points in three areas to a low of .3 percentage points, compared to a statewide drop of .2 percentage points in October to 6.9 percent.

The largest drops in the monthly jobless rates were in Flint where it declined to 7.3 percent, Jackson where it declined to 6.5 percent and Saginaw-Saginaw Township North where it declined to 6.3 percent.

Compared to October 2005, the largest increases in joblessness were in Monroe (going to 6.3 percent from 4.7 percent) Flint (going to 7.3 percent from 6 percent), Jackson (going to 6.5 percent from 5.2 percent) and the Northeast Lower Michigan Region (going to 6.7 percent from 5.4 percent). Overall, the labor picture since a year ago worsened in 15 of the 17 areas, where employment levels dropped. Only in Northeast Lower Michigan, where it was unchanged, and in the Upper Peninsula which recorded an increase in employment by .4 percent was the picture any better.

Private sector jobs declined by .4 percent in October, compared to September, with 6,000 jobs lost in the manufacturing sector. Education and health services gained 6,000 and 4,000 jobs respectively to offset the seasonal decline in leisure and hospitality services. Over the past year, only in the Holland-Grand Haven area did payroll jobs increase.

# Welfare Reform Back On The Table

MIRS, Tuesday, November 28, 2006

The Senate Families and Human Services Committee discussed a bill today that puts welfare reform back on the table.

As it stands, the bill that will be headed toward the full Senate is identical to the welfare reform bill that Gov. Jennifer [GRANHOLM](#) most recently vetoed. However, between the committee and the floor, the bill will be gutted to include a 48-month lifetime welfare limit with new provisions and exemptions.

The new bill would include the following:

- Increase the number of exemptions that will be given to people in the program. This includes those who have an IQ of less than 80, have learning problems, have chronic mental health problems or have some physical limitations.
- It also creates a "stop the clock" option that would stop the recipient's 48-month lifetime limit time clock when the recipient is following his or her work requirements or is gainfully employed
- Stops the 48-month limit in any counties that have an unemployment rate greater than nine percent
- Includes a one-time 12- month extension for certain people

The plan would be applied to all counties that have the administration's new Jobs, Education and Training (JET) program by April 1, 2007 and would apply to the entire state by the fall of 2007. The plan tentatively includes three different sanctions for violating work requirements. The first is a 90-day sanction, the second is a 90-day sanction and the third would be a 12-month sanction.

At the onset of the first sanction, the recipient would have two weeks to meet with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to discuss the problem. If DHS officials find their explanation satisfactory, the sanction would get bypassed. This could only happen once.

The DHS is neutral on the bill, but has some concerns about pushing ahead with welfare reform before it gets conclusive results about the effectiveness of the JET Program.

DHS Legislative Liaison Ron **HICKS** said that the DHS would like the Legislature to hold off on the fix until Oct. 1, 2007 because that's when the state will be able to determine if the JET program is working and the state is meeting federal work requirements.

"Let's not rush into adding additional provisions to what we have in place and seems to be working," Hicks said.

The committee did not take any action on the bills and planned to reconvene Wednesday after session, but the meeting was canceled.

Sen. Bill [HARDIMAN](#) (R-Kentwood), the committee chair, said he thinks that there's an agreement on the package so "it makes some sense to put it forward."

Hicks wanted to wait until after lame duck, but Hardiman insists that this is a good time to move forward because there's more agreement than there's ever been on a welfare reform bill.

Matt [RESCH](#), spokesman for House Speaker Craig [DeROCHE](#) (R-Novi), said Rep. Jerry [KOOIMAN](#) (R-Grand Rapids) has been working with the Senate on coming up with some kind of welfare reform.

"We are working on the issue with the Senate and attempting to work with the administration," Resch said.



However, the administration hasn't seemed willing to talk. Resch said the welfare exemption sunset that's set to expire at the end of the month has spurred a new welfare reform debate.

"This is an opportunity to put some limits on welfare that are unique to Michigan and this is as good a time as any," he said, "With the sunset looking us in the eye, we need to get something done."

It should be noted that there is a bill on the table that will extend that sunset for another six months. Hardiman seems to be more hopeful than Resch that the Governor will do something.

"We haven't heard the Governor's office say that," Hardiman said when asked if he'd gotten the OK from the administration. "She has spoken publicly that she'd be willing to sign welfare reform during lame duck session."

Granholm Spokeswoman Liz [BOYD](#) said that it would be safe to go with Hicks' comments, which were that welfare reform should be looked at after the JET program is assessed.

"We have the JET Program, which really will bring about welfare reform and we really believe that program needs time to work," Boyd said.



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

MARIANNE UDOW  
DIRECTOR

## News Release

**Contact: Maureen Sorbet (517) 373-7394**

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### **Michigan Department of Human Services Summarily Suspends the Group Day Care Home License #DG820263791 of Christal Evans**

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**November 29, 2006**

The Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Children and Adult Licensing (OCAL) issued an order of summary suspension and notice of intent to revoke the license of Wayne County group day care home provider Christal Evans, 19304 Caldwell Street, Detroit, Michigan. This action resulted from a recent investigation of a complaint of the child day care group home.

The November 27, 2006 complaint investigation found violations of the Child Care Organizations Act and administrative rules regarding the care and supervision of children. OCAL took emergency action to protect the health, welfare, and safety of children.

Effective 6:00 p.m., November 28, 2006, the Summary Suspension Order prohibits Christal Evans from operating a group day care home at 19304 Caldwell Street, Detroit, Michigan or at any other address or location. Accordingly, she may not accept children for care after that date and time. The order also requires Ms. Vaughn to inform all of the parents of children in her care that her license has been suspended and that she can no longer provide day care.

Ms. Vaughn has held a license to operate a group day care home since June 10, 2004. The license was for twelve children.

Michigan law defines a group day care home as a private home in which more than six but not more than 12 minor children are given care and supervision for periods of less than 24 hours a day, unattended by a parent or legal guardian, except children related to an adult member of the family by blood, marriage, or adoption. Group day care home includes a home that gives care to an unrelated minor child for more than four weeks during a calendar year.

For more information, consult DHS Web site at [www.michigan.gov/dhs](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs).